



THE

Gill Newsletter

Fall 2021 Issue

Disclaimer:

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Town Hall

Town Hall – Still Open for Business

Town Hall remains open to the public for walk-in visits. Please remember that each department has different office hours. You may want to call ahead of time to make sure the person you want to see will be available at the time of your visit. Face covering may be required – check the sign on the door for the current Board of Health guidelines on face coverings, if any.

Winter Reminders

As much as we've all enjoyed the relatively mild fall weather, cold temperatures and snow are just around the corner.

Winter sand is available to all residents, for private use only, at the Safety Complex. No contractors, please.

Gill's wintertime parking ban begins on November 1st and runs through April 15th. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Residents are advised to secure their mailboxes against possible damage from snow removal operations. The Town is not responsible for damage to mailboxes caused by snow removal operations.

The Town's Snow Removal bylaw states the following: "No person shall throw or put or cause to be thrown or put any snow or ice from any privately owned property into any street, public way, or town-owned land. Whoever violates this bylaw shall be punished by a fine of \$25.00 for each offense."

The Town's Snow Plowing bylaw states the following: "The Highway Superintendent may, for the purpose of removing or plowing snow, or removing ice from any way, remove or cause to be removed to some convenient place, any vehicle which interferes with such work, and in the event of the removal of any vehicle in accordance with the terms hereof, the actual cost of removing said vehicle and any storage charges that may be incurred as a result thereof, may be enforced by the Town in any manner provided by law for the collection of a debt based upon contract."

Recycling Bins & Compost Pails

Recycling bins – the free ones – are now available at the Town Hall. There is a limit of one per household; additional bins can be purchased for \$5 each. Kitchen compost pails are also available free of charge at the Town Hall, with a limit of one per household.



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news,
announcements and
contact information!





Weather Alert Radios

We still have two dozen of the Midland WR-300 AM/FM weather alert radios that were provided to the Town when the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant was still in operation in nearby Vernon, Vermont. If you'd like one (or more!) for free, come to Town Hall. Weather alert radios will broadcast warnings, alerts, and other weather-related information issued by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). Batteries not included. (I've always wanted to say that! Ray)

Surplus Air Conditioners, Etc

The following surplus items are available free to Gill residents:

- Haier air conditioner, HWR06XC6, 6000 BTU/hr, 10+ years old
- Gibson air conditioner, GAL123J1A1, 12000 BTU/hr, 10+ years old
- GE air conditioner, AEL05LX, 5000 BTU/hr, ~5 years old
- Bionaire twin window fan, BW2100B, ~5 years old
- Holmes warm mist humidifier, 3.3 gal. output/day, 10+ years old

If you are interested in any item, please contact Ray at Town Hall (walk-in, phone 413-863-9347, or email administrator@gillmass.org) by Friday, November 19th. If more than one person expresses interest in any item, a name will be drawn at random.

From the Tax Collector

I want to spread the exciting news that Gill taxpayers now have the option of paying tax bills online!

Since we are in the beginning stages of this new program, bills must be paid on or before the due date. Real Estate and Personal Property bills that were due on November 1st were the first tax types to be rolled out for online payment. Other categories (Sewer and Motor Vehicle Excise) will be coming soon.

We encourage you to try out this new option for making payments. The link is available on the homepage of the Town of Gill's website, as well as on the Tax Collector's page. You don't even need your bill copy handy...

There is a fee for this service (fee schedule is on the Unipay link) and you may pay via electronic check or credit card. By the way, the \$0.50 fee to pay by check is less expensive than the postage to mail a payment to Town Hall!

From the Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's office has been very quiet these past couple of months, but a few changes are worth noting. The town received a \$5,000 grant last year to use for Elections and COVID - related needs. The town purchased a new fireproof legal-sized file cabinet for all things related to elections. It will be very handy to have a place to put vote-by-mail and absentee ballots that is not only secure, but safe from fire. Another purchase of multiple 6 foot folding tables will help make

setup for elections much easier. We also have various new signs that will be used not only for elections but for other events as well.

Look for Town census papers and dog registrations in the mail in early January. It is very important to keep the town census up to date to keep your voting status active. Simply check the information on the form sent to you to make any changes or additions. Then sign the form and either drop it off in the drop box by the Town Hall back door, or send the form in the mail. It is also important to note that even if there are no changes you should sign the form and get it to the Town Hall.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season!

Doreen Stevens, Town Clerk
townclerk@gillmass.org

Office hours:

Monday 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.,

Tuesday 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.,

Wednesday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.,

Thursday 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

By appointment 413-863-8013

Board of Health

Second Friday Nursing Hours Serving all residents of Gill

Nov 12, 10 a.m. - 12 noon
Stoughton Place Community Room

Flu Vaccine Clinic

Standard and High Dose formulas.
Homebound residents may arrange visits. Please Bring Insurance Cards.
Free if no Insurance



Every Second Friday:

- Blood Pressure
- Pulse Oxygen
- Weight
- Health Information
- Assistance Connecting to Services
- Sharps Box Exchange

Franklin Regional Council of Governments Cooperative Public Health Service

Do You Need A Covid Vaccine?

At this time, most people in the United States over the age of 12 can receive a COVID-19 vaccination. You don't need an ID or insurance to get it. People ages 12-17 can get the Pfizer vaccine. People aged 18+ can get any vaccine. Completion of primary vaccination is the Center for Disease Control's top priority goal for addressing the pandemic in the United States and around the world. CDC recommendations for Emergency Use Authorization covering primary series COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5 to 11 are in process at the writing of this article, with final recommendation expected in the coming days.

There is strong evidence that COVID-19 vaccines continue to be effective at reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, even against the widely circulating Delta variant. However, public health experts are starting to see reduced protection, especially among certain populations, against mild and moderate disease.

A third dose of mRNA vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) is recommended

as part of the primary series of vaccination for some individuals with compromised immune systems. A booster shot, which is an additional shot to counter waning effectiveness of the primary series over time, is now also recommended for all three available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States. For individuals who received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the following groups are eligible for a booster shot at 6 months or more after their initial series:

- 65 years and older
- Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings
- Age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions
- Age 18+ who work or live in high-risk settings

For individuals who received the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine, boosters are now recommended for those 18 and older who were vaccinated two or more months ago.

The CDC has determined that eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Factors to consider include: evidence regarding antibody response, past experience with primary vaccination, preference for the vaccine type originally received, and availability. CDC's recommendations allow this flexibility about "mix and match" dosing for booster shots but not for primary vaccination series.

Where can I find my shot? The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) offers several services that can help. Vaxfinder.mass.gov lists links for finding vaccine providers and

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making an appointment at a pharmacy, mobile site or pop-up clinic searchable by zip code. Appointments are beginning to come on line for booking boosters with more to come in the next weeks. There is help available also by phone. The State-sponsored 211 line is the place to call for help finding a COVID-19 vaccination clinic and the home visit call line is 833-983-0485.

For assistance with any of these tools for finding a vaccine, or help navigating any health issue, please do not hesitate to call or visit Cooperative Public Health Service nurses Lisa White and Meg Ryan. We are available on “Second Fridays” from 10 – noon at the Stoughton Place Community Room, or by phone (413) 774-3167 (Lisa x156; Meg x 158)

Lisa White, Public Health Nurse

*FRCOG Cooperative
Public Health Service*

*12 Olive St., Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301
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Fax: 413-665-1411
Mobile: 413-834-5596*

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Board of Assessors

Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) is a revaluation year for the Town, which means the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) reviews and certifies property values town wide prior

to setting Gill’s tax rate. This process has been ongoing since early spring.

The Town recently received permission to begin public disclosure of the updated property values, as the DOR has completed its review of the proposed assessments. These assessment values are preliminary and are pending certification following the final and approval by the DOR. Public disclosure of the updated values is required by statute every five years.

The updated values were calculated at “Full and Fair Cash Value” using market data property sales between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020. The Town received assistance with the revaluation from the firm of Patriot Properties, Inc.

The public disclosure period begins Tuesday, November 9, 2021 and continues through Thursday, November 18, 2021. As part of the public disclosure process, valuation listings will be available for review at the Gill Town Hall during office hours. Office hours are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. You may call Diane Sumrall in the Assessors’ Office at 413-863-0138 or by email to assessors@gillmass.org with any questions.

Free Resources to Energy and Cost Savings

As a part of an ongoing AARC (Affordable Access Regional Coordination) grant, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has partnered with Community Action Pioneer Valley to provide no-cost clean energy consulting to low-and-moderate income

households. Homeowners, landlords, or renters can sign up to have their property assessed by Community Action’s Energy Programs staff.

After the assessment, you will be provided with an evaluation of your home that includes installation cost, energy savings, maintenance costs and your calculated payback. Information about available rebates and financial incentives for clean energy upgrades and installations will be provided.

Interested residents should contact either Community Action (413-376-1140)

energyprog@communityaction.us or FRCOG <https://frcog.org/clean-energy/>

These programs can help lower your heating and cooling bills. If your household or your tenants are within the income limits you may be eligible for a variety of energy efficiency and clean energy incentives and rebates; a family of one with an income up to \$54,600, or a family of six with an income up to \$130,601 are eligible.

Four Winds School

At Four Winds School, students and teachers are glad to be back to an (almost) normal school year. This year our students are studying ancient civilizations in Humanities class, and biology, anatomy, and psychology in Science class, in addition to our usual math, English, and Latin curricula and our weekly life skills class. We have several slots available for visiting prospective students, so please feel free to



Four Winds students enjoy a nature walk.

contact us if you and your middle-schooler are interested in a flexible and independent educational environment.

We are all grateful to be back in the classroom full time, and we are keeping safe by continuing to mask indoors and by running a weekly pooled COVID-19 testing program through CIC.

Please check our website to learn more about our program (www.fourwindsschool.info), or send us an email at fourwindsteachers@gmail.com if you have any questions. Stay well!

College Graduates

Cassandra Holmes graduated from Elms College in May with a bachelor's degree in speech language pathology.

Wesley Brooks and Bryn Kruzlic earned their bachelor's degrees when they graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst also in May.

Poetry Contest Winner

Ethan Chase, a junior in the animal science veterinary program at Franklin County Technical School, was a co-winner in the Youth category of the 2021 Poet's Seat Poetry Contest. He submitted his poem, Not Just a Number. <https://www.recorder.com/Two-Youth-Poems-for-July-8-41232677>

Slate Library News

Many thanks to everyone who came out to take part in the 100th birthday celebration for the Library on September 26th. The day's festivities were shared with the Gill Harvest Festival put on by the Agriculture Commission. It was a joy to feel the town's spirits as bright as the weather that afternoon! Special thanks to Cliff Hatch who baked a replica of the Library for us all to savor and to Doug Edson with Renaissance Excavators

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who donated the sand for our new sandbox. Gratitude to the Historic Commission for keeping the Slate family portraits safe during the library's renovations. They are now back on display in the Library. Come check out what's new and happening at the library this fall!

Upcoming Programming

Local Gill History

Saturday, November 13 @ 1 p.m.
Lynn Stowe Tomb & Pam Shoemaker will talk about & sign their two books about Gill history — *Riverside: Life Along the Connecticut in Gill, Massachusetts* and *Jennie Williams Bardwell: Life in Gill 1860-1950*.

Felt Snowflake Ornaments

Saturday, November 20 @ 12 p.m.
Come play with felt and embroidery floss and create a one-of-a-kind ornament for the holiday season. All materials provided — just bring your nimble fingers and creative ideas!

Holiday Card Making!

Saturday, December 4
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Beautiful paper and art materials. Come craft a special card for someone this holiday season. — all ages, coffee and treats.

Library Hours: Tuesday 2-6 p.m.,
Wednesday 3:30 -7:30 p.m., Thursday
2-8 p.m., and Saturday 10-2 p.m. For
more information about any of our
programs, please call (413)863-2591
or email gill.slate.library@gmail.com

Jocelyn Castro-Santos
Director, Slate Library

Gill Historical Commission

Membership

Kudos to Lynn Stowe Tomb who has left the GHC after seven years of dedicated service and numerous projects including two successful books. Her volunteer work will be missed. Welcome to Charlene Currie who is a new member. Newly retired, she brings many skills and has plunged into re-designing the GHC website and working on the Wert Project.

If you are interested in GHC membership or want to volunteer some time to help with transcribing documents or working on projects and displays, please contact a member.

Robert Darr Wert Project

GHC continues to accumulate information and textile images from Wert's Country Prints (1949-1966) on River Road in Gill. The cocky little rooster trademark and the words "by hand, robert darr wert" are present on textiles and tiles throughout the country. GHC is interested in adding photographs of your Wert items to our inventory of what Country Prints produced. If you would like to add photographs of the work in your home, please contact a GHC member.

Books

Riverside: Life Along the Connecticut River in Gill, Massachusetts and *Jennie Williams Bardwell: Life in Gill 1860-1950* are available for gift-giving. (Donations: *Riverside* \$45 and *Jennie* \$50 plus media postage). Order

forms are at the Town Hall and on the website as well as from pshoe27@gmail.com. Lynn and Pam will talk about their experiences researching, writing, and designing these books at Slate Library at 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 13. Come with questions.

Recipes

GHC has several cookbooks produced in Gill and showing the legacy of good food from the past. Please share a recipe that is a family favorite passed down from previous generations. We will include some of these tasty bites in future newsletters and on the website.

Thanksgiving 1939

In her 1939 diary, Alice (Doloff) Blake, Slate librarian for many years, details the holiday gathering of her extended family. Wife of Ernest Blake and mother of Ruth and Clesson, she starts a week ahead of the holiday by washing the curtains and then decides to scrub the woodwork in the downstairs rooms. Finally, the floors are mopped and waxed. On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, she goes to Turners Falls and buys the groceries and meat.

Got the Bird's Eye Turkey I had ordered, 9 lbs. 9 oz. dressed weight, supposed to equal 12 lb. 9 oz. as they are usually weighed. Frozen hard and pressed flat and looks small. Ordered Bird's Eye Peas and cream to be gotten tomorrow.



Wed. Nov. 29 -

Fair and warm. Made two squash pies and two mince. Gave living and dining rooms a final cleaning and dusting. Made stuffing for turkey, chopped cooked giblets and meat from the neck, one loaf bread, couple dozen rolled Boston crackers, three or four eggs, salt, pepper and poultry seasoning. Also made chocolate cake with marshmallow frosting and got table set. Ruth and Maurice (future son-in-law) arrived about nine o'clock. M. brought his skates.

Thursday, Thanksgiving -

We can certainly be thankful, when we read the terrible war news, that our ancestors had the guts and the gumption to endure the hardships and frustrations of pioneer life. We are now profiting thereby and how! Intended to rise early but it was nearly eight. Got the turkey washed, stuffed, and in to bake first thing. Then took it easy for half an hour while I ate breakfast. I

do enjoy a leisurely breakfast with a good story on the side!

Ruth made the beds upstairs and did the breakfast dishes. I made the beds downstairs, got the vegetables washed and peeled, then made the English pudding, whole recipe, adding two eggs and a pkg. of mixed candied fruits and a few nutmeats. Then got the squash on to cook, made the pudding sauce (egg and cream), got the dishes out, and got the vegetables on to cook. Also had an extra dish of stuffing to bake.

It was about one and half past when the crowd arrived. There were twelve of us all together for dinner. Rachel (Clapp) and Reginald French and Rebecca, Margaret and Richard Clapp, Mr. Fletcher and Eleanor Fletcher (related to the Clapps), Maurice Cook, Ruth and Clesson and Pa and me. The turkey was well done and tasted delicious, but also collapsed when

I tried to lift it out onto the platter, whether from too much cooking or from having been pressed so flat when frozen. I decided to serve from the kitchen. Richard mashed the potatoes, Reg helped with the squash, Margaret had already cleaned the celery and washed the grapes which she brought. So with all the help we got along swimmingly. Richard helped serve by putting the food on the plates and Ruth carried them to the table. The turkey was fine, tender, juicy and delicious and they all seemed to like the stuffing. I also had tomato juice, cranberry jelly, and Ruth's favorite cranberry relish. Reg and Rachel told us of a few of their interesting experiences.

They left first before dark. [Some] went to the football game at T. F. between Turners High and Greenfield High, the latter winning 14-7. Then they went skating a little while.



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